



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE  
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

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NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH  
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REFER TO:

Dr. Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics  
Department of Genetics  
School of Medicine  
Stanford University  
Palo Alto, California 94304

JUL 28 1967

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

I am delighted to learn that you have accepted the Surgeon General's invitation to serve on the National Advisory Mental Health Council. I wish to welcome you to membership on the Council and to offer you every possible assistance. I also want to assure you that we were, indeed, familiar with your column in the Washington Post, and that your membership on the Council would in no way restrict this activity. There is, of course, as you noted, an obligation to keep confidential the information received as a Council member until released by the Surgeon General.

I am not sure how much you know about the national mental health program and its objectives in its totality, but since our program objectives and policies are a matter of immediate concern to you as a member of the National Advisory Mental Health Council, I am forwarding, under separate cover, a number of pamphlets and reprints together with a copy of the Mental Health Act, in order that at your leisure you may be able to orient yourself further about our work.

As you will note from these articles, the mental health program of the United States Public Health Service began over a quarter of a century ago, and the changes in its objectives from its inception have reflected quite accurately the changing concepts of mental health work in our nation generally. Our first concerns were with the mentally ill and the delinquent. Very soon we were requested to concern ourselves with inspecting and making recommendations for the improvement of the public mental hospitals in the several States. I am sure that you are aware that many of these hospitals were deplorable places a quarter of a century ago. The need for more knowledge and more trained people in the mental health field became apparent early in our work. As a result, several field studies were initiated, but an all-out

effort in the field of mental health and illness was not possible until the passage of the National Mental Health Act in 1946. This authorized the establishment of the National Institute of Mental Health and the appointment of a National Advisory Mental Health Council. It also directed our efforts into three main channels of activity -- assisting through grants in the training of additional personnel for mental health work; assisting through grants and investigations in the development of expanded and more energetic research into the causes, diagnosis and treatment of mental illnesses; and assistance in the establishment, development, and more effective utilization of resources in mental health programs through field studies and applied research and through grants and consultation with the States.

You may be interested in knowing some of the other members of the National Advisory Mental Health Council. A list of the present members is enclosed, with the termination date of appointment indicated after each name.

I hope that this letter and the material forwarded to you under separate cover will be helpful to you in orienting yourself with regard to our work.

For your information in future planning, following are the dates for the Council meetings during fiscal year 1968 (from July 1, 1967, through June 30, 1968): November 20-22, 1967; March 25-27, 1968; and June 13-15, 1968.

Before the November meeting, we would like to arrange for a day of orientation here at the Institute for all new members of the Council. We are anxious that you understand as much as possible about our work, our problems, our policies, and our methods of operation before your first Council meeting. I am sure that this knowledge would be helpful to you in understanding quickly some of the problems which will confront you at the meeting. We will get in touch with you later on regarding this.

I am enclosing a draft of a press release announcing your appointment to the Council. I would appreciate your going over this, making any corrections or comments which you see fit, and returning it to us as quickly as possible. It is customary for the Surgeon General to announce the appointment of new Council members in this way.

I am looking forward with real pleasure to working with you.

Sincerely,



Stanley F. Yolles, M. D.  
Director

Enclosures